APRIL/MAY 2016 A.S. LI

Meiassis Dragon

THE BARONY OF DRAGONSSPINE

The Beast Issue

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Regular Local Gatherings

Fighter Practice
Thursday
Winter: Westside Center
6:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Summer: Bear Creek Park
6:00 pm to dark
Sunday Afternoon
Various Parks in Monument

Archery Practice
Sir Ton's Field (Black Forest)
Sundays
1:00-4:00 pm
Weather Dependent
Bear Creek Park
Thursdays
6:00 pm
Summer Only

Business Meeting
At the first fighter practice each month
6:00 pm

Sewing Workshops
(also possible woodshop space)
Maitresse Mathilde's
Briargate area
2nd and 4th Sundays
1:00-5:00 pm

Armouring Night
Count Thorbrandr's
Northwestern Black Forest
1st, 3rd, and 5th Tuesdays
7:00-9:00 pm

A&S/Largesse Workshops
Lady Adelaisa's house
Fountain Area
3rd and 5th weeks
1:00-5:00 pm

Dance Practice
Westside Community Center
7-9 pm

All meetings in private homes may be cancelled or changed at the host's discretion. Please keep an eye on the Facebook page for the most up to date information.

Upcoming Events

events on TRM progress * events on TE Dragonsspine progress

April 2016		
2	Dragonsspine	Feast of Fools*
9	Saint Golias	Kingdom A&S
16	Caerthe	Dungeons and Dragons
16	Fontaine dans Sable	Medieval Faire Demo and Charity Drive
23	Caerthe	Caerthen Dance Collegium
29-1	Artemesia	Known World Heraldic and Scribal Symposium
30	Unser Hafen	Unser Hafen Investiture*#
30	al-Barran	Albuquerque Renaissance Faire
May 2016		
7	Dragonsspine	May Day*
7-8	Ravenhyrst	Golden Thimble
7-8	Nahrun Kabirun	Masquerade Ball
14-15	Aarquelle	Coronation#*
26-30	al-Barran	Grand Outlandish VLIII
27-30	Caerthe	The Siege at Inlandish
June 2016		
3-5	Dragonsspine	Champions#
3-5	Unser Hafen	Colorado Medieval Festival Demo
11	Citadel of the Southern Pass	Baronial Fair & Social
17-27	Society	SCA 50th Year Celebration
23-26	Plattefordham	Northern Realm War*
30-4	Drygestan	Keepers of Dry Stone#
July 2016		
1-3	Unser Hafen	Heroes and Legends
8-10	Caer Galen	Caer Galen Defender

Buisness Meeting Minutes

Dragonsspine Baronial Meeting

March 3, 2016

Barony Business:

Seneschal: Please note that the Barony of Dragonsspine is looking for people to fill these offices: Chatelaine, Golden Key and Quarter Master. Please send your letters of intent to Don Sangermano and His Excellency Broddi if you are interested; would like to make a decision by the end of March. Dragonsspine is putting in a bid for Spring Coronation. Sadly, Jane Tillin, Veronique, from Fontaine passed away Sat night at Estrella.

Their Excellencies: His Excellency Broddi reported that Galaxy Fest asked Dragonsspine to bring a booth next year! Also His Excellency asks for a good showing April 30 at Game Con; see notes below.

Webmaster: Lady Viola asked to email her events info and she will update web-site with the info. Please keep in mind if your emails are bouncing to make sure you are sending them to the right address as they have all changed.

Exchequer: Lady Abigail reported the barony has over $15,150 in the bank. Right now the barony pays $80.00 every Thursday night. His Excellency Broddi encourages people to consider donating on a regular basis to cover the cost of the facility; otherwise the money has to come out of the barony monies.

Quartermaster: Lady Abigail gave report.

Gold Key: Lady Abigail gave report that all clothes have been returned.

Herald: Duchess Selene gave her report. She will be gone next Thursday, so please talk to Lord Seamus or Lady Liliona for heraldry questions.

Knight Marshall: Lord Turlough reported that there are steady numbers at practice; no injuries.

Archery Marshall: Lord Bearnard reported that as the weather is getting better he will be checking out the field for practice in the near future.

Minister of A&S: The Baronial A&S will be held October 29 this year. There will be 3 categories: Medieval head coverings, medieval woodwork and illumination!! Also she is coming up with a game for Coronation and anyone who would like to help is welcome! Let Lady Beatrix know if you are willing to teach classes.

Rapier Marshall: Lord Antoine reported that our forces did excellent at Estrella. He has also been named Commander of gun teams and will be building deck guns; if you want to do the guns let him know and come over to practice. He wants us to be ready to take them to Northern Realms.

Chronicler: not in attendance.

Game Con Report by Dustin, district 21 teacher: Game Con will be held Sat, April 30 at Rampart High School from 8 to 5. They are expecting 300 students. Dragonsspine has been invited to have a booth and participate in rapier and heavy fighting demos. Dustin came so he could observe what we do and to discuss what and how we will provide demos.

Meeting adjourned 6:50 pm.

YIS, Lady Liliona Hampton

Greetings,

This year at Battlemoor there will be a museum that will celebrate the 30 year history of our mighty kingdom. To that end I am looking for items to display that will help to capture some of our kingdom's glorious history and pre-history. Such pieces can include (but not be limited to): regalia, scrolls, event flyers, gatebooks, Outlandish Heralds, pictures, A&S projects, significant group documents, etc. If you have some of the aforementioned items which you are willing to loan and/or copy please contact me.

Please know that we are making arrangments to protect the artifacts as much as possible. This includes (and again not limited to) being within a sturdy and enclosed tent, using protective display mounts (such as plastic coverings), and setting them off the ground on sturdy tables and display boards. We can work with you on any particular concerns that you may have. We can similarly work with you on transporting the items. Additionally, if you are interested in being a curator or docent for this display, please contact me. I would like to have a grand display and therefore will need assistance.

I hope that you can help make this museum truly spectacular. If nothing else, do come prepared to feast your eyes on a collective and great history.

YIS, Master Jethro Stille

Buisness Meeting Minutes

Dragonsspine
Baronial Meeting

April 7, 2016

Meeting led by Don Gianni Sangermano, Seneschal

Past Events:

Candlemas: Lady Jeannette gave a report: 143 adults, 10 children, feast was sold out and was absolutely incredible! 2 refunds given due to illness; made $105 just on non-members attending. Amount made before kingdom adjustments is $1033. The donation lunch which was completely donated by Lady Altani made $382 which she donated to the Barony. As usual, the donation lunch was awesome. $160 made from the auction of the 2 bows. $194 made from heavy fighter/rapiers which was donated to the Shriners Hospital.

Crown Tourney: Well attended and a fun event

Gulf Wars: A good time was had by all despite the weather

Feast of Fools: Great event; report next month

Future Local Events:

April 30 **Demo at Rampart High School**

We have committed ourselves to help with the Demo at Rampart High School; fighting at 12:30 pm. Lady Basseva went around at Feast of Fools to sign up volunteers and His Excellency Broddi has also talked with people about helping with the event. Please attend if you signed up and if not please find a r eplacement as we want a good showing; if you can't attend and can't find a replacement (please attempt this), let His Excellency know you can't attend.

May 1 **May Day** Duchess Selene

This is not an official event, but donations will be welcome. There will be heavy, rapier and archery and May pole dancing. There will be a potluck; please let Lady Angel know what you are bringing to ensure a variety of dishes.

June 3-5 **Dragonsspine Champions** Lady Abigail

Crown will be attending this event. Looks to be a fun event!

Barony Business:

Don Sangermano, Seneschal: Please note that the Barony of Dragonsspine is looking for people to fill these offices: Chatelaine, Golden Key and Quarter Master. Please send your letters of intent to Don Sangermano and His Excellency Broddi if you are interested. Sanger also gave a report about some changes that will be affecting troll.

His Excellency Broddi reminded everyone that the move to the outside site is the 1st Thur in May. Our bank account has increased which is good news but please remember we accept donations for the indoor site all year round. Also if you have anything for largesse please give to Madame Adelaisa as we need lots for the upcoming camping season.

Lady Viola, Webmaster: Lady Viola asked to email her events info and she will update web-site with the info and also get it on Kingdom website. She has confirmed all emails of all officers and asks that you please check the email you are using and make sure it's the new one.

Lady Abigail, Exchequer: Reported that there is $15,000 in account, $7500 in checking. There will be a troll or gate class next Thur.

Quarter Master: Lady Abigail gave report and said she is getting things back and accounted for; if you need anything at this time please talk to her.

Gold Key: Lady Abigail gave report that all clothes have been returned.

Duchess Selene, Herald: Report given on what names and devices are at what levels at this point.

Knight Marshall: Not in attendance**.**

Lord Bearnard, Archery Marshall: Encouraged people to come out on Sundays and give archery a try as it is a lot of fun!

Mistress Lydia, Minister of A & S: She talked about the garb series that is happening in preparation for all of us to look good at Coronation. Tonight the class was about hats and 2 weeks from now it will be on bags and what to carry! Let Lady Beatrix know if you are willing to teach classes.

Lord Antoine, Rapier Marshall: Reported that rapier numbers are up particularly youth fighters; no injuries.

Madame Adelaisa, Chronicler: Not in attendance.

There was a short discussion on being interested in getting the lamp work guild going again.

Don Sanger thanked everyone for all they do for the barony which is very much appreciated!

Meeting adjourned.

YIS, Lady Liliona Hampton

Dragonsspine Champions and Polling

Dragonsspine Champions and Baronial Polling

Site opens at 3:00p.m. June 3, 2016.

Site closes at 4:00 pm June 5, 2016
4625 Tall Horse Trail
Sedalia, CO 80135

Event Steward:
Abigail MacNaught
(Belva Yost)
Redheadinabottle@yahoo.com
(719) 313-8373

Registration Fees:

Camping

Member (17 and older) $15.00
Non-member(17 and older) $20.00
Youth (ages 7 to 16) $7.00
Child 6 and under free

Day Trip

Adult Member $10.00
Adult non-member $15.00
Youth (ages 7 to 16) $5.00
Child 6 and under free

Greeting from the Barony of Dragonsspine. Please join us for Polling for the next Baron and Baroness of Dragonsspine and the choosing of our Baronial Champions June 3 to June 5 2016 in beautiful Sedalia, CO. We have camping, Heavy weapons tournaments, Rapier Tournaments and Archery Tournaments. The tournaments will determine the next Champion of Dragonsspine.

On Saturday there will be a fabric swap and a rolling pin toss. The Heavy, Rapier and Archery tournaments will be held to determine the best fighter, fencer and archer in the Barony of Dragonsspine.

This will also be the populaces chance to poll for the next Baron and Baroness of Dragonsspine. Please note that if you are only coming for polling, you do not have to pay site fee and will get a specific site token. If you stay past the polling you will be charged site fee for Champions. All site tokens must be visible at all times.

Site restrictions: All fires must have an off/on switch and fire extinguishers must be visible and available at all times. Dogs must be on leash and with an adult (15 or older) at all times when not in a completely enclosed kennel (roof, floor, 4 walls). The creek is off limits. Violators will be asked to leave the event.

Camping in designated areas only.

Directions:

Take I-25 to exit 174, Tomah Road. Turn left onto Sky View Ln, Turn right onto Frontage Road, In 2.1 miles turn left onto Tomah Road, In 4 miles turn right onto CO-105 (Perry Park Road). In 3.5 miles turn left onto Tall Horse Trail. Google maps has the best directions to the site.

Polling Information

On June 5, 2016 the Barony of Dragonsssspine will hold poling for the next Baron and Baroness of our great Barony. The site is the same as for Champions, 4625 Tall Horse Trail Sedalia, CO 80135.

If you arrive on Sunday, there is no site fee.

Please make sure you have your membership cards. The Kingdom Seneschal or their representative will be checking memberships when you cast your vote.

Schedule
10 am court
11 am Poling opens
2 pm Poling closes
3 pm court
4 pm we must be off site

Please note, there are no near by restaurants and lunch isn't planed or provided at this time. Please plan accordingly.

Crown Tournament Event Information

Crown Tournament Information

May 13 - 15, 2016

Site opens Friday at 3:00PM
and closes Sunday at 5:00PM

The Abbey Events Complex,
2951 East US Highway 50,
Cañon City, CO 81212

Event Steward:

The Honorable Lady Generica McKenna
(mka Terry Dawson)

Directions:

Follow the King's Highway (I-25) to Pueblo. Take exit 101 and head west on Highway 50 toward Canon City for approximately 34 miles. The Abbey is on the right side of the highway as you are entering Canon City. The site is wet. There is a winery and tasting room on site. There will be a cash bar available at feast. Drink responsibly or the event steward will mock you mercilessly for the next year.

Site Fees:

Adult: $12 PreReg; $15 at the gate
Ages 5-17: $6
Under 5 yrs: Free
$5 Non-Member Surcharge applies
Feast: $15

Event Description:

Join us at the beautiful Holy Cross Abbey in Canon City, Colorado for Spring Coronation. The site is a former monastery located about 35 miles west of I-25 at Pueblo on US-50 at an elevation of 5330 feet. The Abbey features Gothic and Tudor style facades in a setting of green lawns and trees. We have the abbey with the chapel and many small gathering rooms as well as the extensive grounds available. Working around the court schedule will be a Faire Environment.

Shires, Baronies, Households and Guilds will be encouraged to set up booths with opportunities to teach classes, provide entertainment, etc. The jewelers, lampworkers, equestrians, bookbinders and scribes have confirmed they will be attending. Merchants will be there as well. The Battlemoor autocrats will host a meeting. If anyone else wishes to reserve meeting space, please contact the event steward and she will do whatever she needs to make your meeting/demo/sales booth/ donation lunch etc. a success.

The Abbey has limited double occupancy twin bed rooms available starting at $41/night. They will also open the field house to people who wish to camp indoors with showers and bathrooms for $8.50/night. RV hookups begin at $15/night. Contact the Abbey directly for these details at 719-275-8631. There are also hotels in the immediate vicinity, ranging from 1950's style holiday motels to a Quality Inn, a Super 8, a Best Western and a Hampton Inn. If you are required to attend as either a kingdom officer, visiting royalty or territorial baron/ baroness, please contact the event steward before making hotel arrangements.

The Abbey will allow food from offsite to be served outdoors. They, in consultation with Mistress Liepa, are creating the evening feast. Details will be posted as they become available. Animals on leashes are allowed outside the buildings. Pueblo is 35 miles away as well. Saint Thomas More Hospital is only three miles away.

TENTATIVE Schedule of Activities:

Friday, 13 May

Friday Night Faire Fights
6:00-8:00 Come join Lady Zephyr fighting the animals in the Faire. Tentatively, there will be bear, boar, alligator and rabbit pits.

Friday Night Court—To Be Decided

Saturday, 14 May

Coronation Ceremonies and the Faire Day: Follow a traditional Coronation Day Schedule Day: Around the court schedule will be a Faire Environment.

Shires, Baronies, Households, Merchants and Guilds will be encouraged to set up booths/opportunities to teach classes, provide entertainment, sell wares, etc …

During the day, the Battlemoor autocrat and populace meeting In the evening: The Abbey will serve a professionally prepared feast for approximately $15 per person

Sunday, 15 May

Tournaments Queen's Favor Tournament (Heavy), Protector of the Queens Heart (Rapier),
Defender of the Queen (C&T)

http://www.theabbeycc.com

Herald's Information

Herald News for March 31, 2016

GENERAL INFORMATION

Summary of status for the 1st quarter of 2016:

January: None

February:

Badge Resubmission

House Broken Horn

March:

Badge Resubmission:

Abigail MacNaught

Castle Commentary:

Broddi – Badge

Abigail MacNaught – Badge

Laurel Commentary:

Reyna Frogge – Device

Laurel – Being Decided:

Name: Bjorn bastarðr

Dante Celestino de San Vincenza

Florie Edde of Braemar

Godric Friis

Device: Cecelia Caterina da Firenze

Isabella Maria Francesco

Seamus MacRae

Liliona Ruth Hampton

Doran von Falkenstein

Passed in the 4th quarter of 2015

NAME: Algernon Blackwell

Toki Fleinn

THE PATH OF A NAME/DEVICE/BADGE

a.k.a. "Why does it take so long?"

Duchess Selene of the Sky, Scalene Pursuivant

Explanation of heraldic pathways for a name or device submission when all is "perfect"

Local Packet of Submission from Scalene Pursuivant to Castle Herald

All Dragonsspine (DS) submissions for the month are combined, emailed, and snail mailed to the Castle Herald to arrive by the 1st of next month

Letter of Presentation (LoP) from Castle Herald to Rampart Herald

Castle Herald consolidates all packets for the month, and requests comments

Letter of Intent (LoI) and Letter of Return (LoR) from Rampart Herald

Rampart Herald reviews commentaries from the Castle Herald's Report for the month.

Rampart composes the LoI to the Laurel Sovereign of Arms stating the intent to register the names, devices, badges. He also provides the LoR (Letter of Return) for items needing rework and resubmission

Letter of Acceptance and Return (LoAR) to Known World

After receiving the list of submissions from Rampart, the Laurel Sovereign allows at least 3 months for all Kingdoms' commentary

After commentary is provided, a formal decision is made to accept, return, or wait for further explanation of each item

A letter of official acceptance and registration of your name/device/badge is sent to you.

Your local group herald will use information at each phase to inform Baronial members of their item's status in the process.

This all can take about 5-8 months, or longer for a single item.

The Sheep that Changed the Face of Art and History

By: Blacksheep

The Sheep That Changed the Face of Art and History

by Blacksheep

One of the most beautiful and yet commonplace images in the art of the Medieval and Renaissance periods is the portrayal of sheep and lambs. Each artist used the animals common to his homeland as models for his creations. The study of these portrayals can give us an idea of the changes that took place in the sheep of Europe during a time when there were few natural studies written or breeding records kept. These artistic images can also allow us to make assertions on the origins of modern breeds and trace the economic and aesthetic influence of a North African sheep on the whole of Continental Europe. This paper will attempt to trace the origins and influence of the Merino sheep mainly in art, but also in literature and natural studies, from the time of its appearance on the European continent through the Renaissance period.

Used in this study were seventeen portrayals by fifteen period artists. The earliest work is *Christ the Good Shepherd (Fig. 9), a mosaic from the fifth century. The most recent piece echoes the same title, but is a 1660 painting by Bartolome Murillo (Fig.3). Only one picture each was found from England, Germany or Greece; therefore, the concentration of this study centers in the Netherlands, Italy and Spain. As supporting material, ancient natural studies were also considered.*

Literature has recorded facts about sheep and wool as far back as the early Roman Empire. Italy was famous for producing woolens of all textures and colors (1). Pliny classifies sheep into course, medium and fine wool categories (2). Later the art of various Italian masters seem to bear out these observations.

After the fall of the Roman Empire and the progression of the Medieval Period, we need to understand that by the eleventh century gold and silver had largely disappeared in the West and the Europeans had to sell goods and services to pay for their imports. The wool and textile industries provided the bulk of the goods being exported. These industries centered in the Low Countries, especially the Netherlands, where conditions were favorable for sheep raising. After the thirteenth century both in England and on the Continent there was a ready cash market for wool.(3)

With the rapid expansion of trade and the growing lust for luxurious products the Spanish found their "Golden Fleece". Actually what they acquired in the early twelfth century was the Merino sheep. The sheep whose fleece was, and continues to be, the finest ever produced. They were first brought to Spain by a tribe of Moors from North Africa called the Beni-Merinos. By 1526 there were some three and one half million Merino sheep in Spain and constituted a major element of the economy. Since the king of Spain owned large estates in Italy and grazing land was in short supply, he sent flocks of Merino there as well (4) Even with tight controls and severe punishments for exporting the Merino, changes in body type and wool characteristics in the sheep across Europe including in the Netherlands and the British Isles make it evident that a trickle of Merino blood had begun to run across Europe.

To understand the physical characteristics of the Merino and thereby look for those characteristics in period portrayals, one needs to examine the art of the Spanish masters of the 1600's. Frey Juan Mainos' *Adoration of the Shepherds (Fig. 1) is a beautiful oil on canvas showing a young lamb lying at the base of a manger with its legs bound. It is solid white with a very woolly head, tiny ears, short face and prominent dewlap. The dewlap is extra skin that hangs from the neck of some animals, especially that of the very loose and wrinkle-skinned Merino sheep. Mainos' picture is so detailed as to relate a feeling of wool texture. The lamb's fleece appears unusually long, dense and fine, also a characteristic of the Merino sheep.*

Francisco de Zurbarans' *Adoration (Fig. 2) is very much like Mainos'. They share many of the same breed characteristics, but Zurbarans' lamb has much more wool on its head, so much so it seems to obscure its eyes from the sight of the viewers.*

Our third Spanish artist, Bartolomi Murillo, creates an image in 1660 entitled *Christ the Good Shepherd. (Fig. 3) The lamb portrayed looks very much like our modern Merino. The small ears, short nose, woolly face and lower legs, wrinkles and prominent dewlap make this sheep unmistakably Merino.*

When the Spanish acquired the Merino, they were quite careful to keep watch over this valuable asset so it was quite by accident the Merino bloodline came to the British Isles. There is little to tell us the complete story of

The Sheep that Changed the Face of Art and History

their introduction, but it is thought sheep from Spain were stowed away on Armada ships that set sail for the coast of Britain. These sheep, which were intended to provide fresh meat for the sailors, became castaways when at least one of the ships wrecked off the southeastern coast of Scotland. The sheep swam ashore, interbred with the native mountain sheep, and are the supposed foundation stock for the exceptionally hardy breeds such as the Cheviot. (5) The modern hill breeds of Scotland still closely resemble sheep portrayed by the Dutch masters of the 1600's. (Fig. 7, 8)

In the Netherlands, as in the British Isles, the Merino were not introduced as pure breeds, but were used for cross breeding. The changes in the Dutch art are therefore more subtle, but is still obvious. Recording this change are five pieces done by two different artists. An altarpiece carved in 1425 by Jan Van Eyck (Fig. 4) shows a somewhat short-fleeced lamb. His next work *Adoration of the Lamb (Fig. 5) shows a sheep not unlike the modern Romney breed. Both Eycks' sheep and the Romney show adaptations common to sheep raised in cool, moist climates with abundant pasture. They have a thick body type, moderately short wool-free legs, and a hornless wool-free head.*

By the middle 1600's our second Dutch artist, Paulus Potter, paints images of sheep very different from those of Eyck. In the painting *Shepherds(Fig. 6) Potter shows a resting ram with large spiral horns, a woolly head and cheeks. The ram's legs also seem to have a light cover of wool. In 1646 his painting Peasant Family (Fig. 7) shows no horned sheep, but several hornless ewes and lambs. This picture shows more variety and diversity of sheep than any other examined in this study. There is a mix of wool growth patterns, but most sheep show woolly heads. These sheep have a much lighter framed body, more characteristic of a desert animal than the stocky lambs Van Eycks' shows. This same body type is represented in Potters 1652 Resting Herd (Fig. 8). One interesting observation about Potters sheep is their striking resemblance to the modern hill Cheviot of Scotland in both body shape and wool growth pattern.*

Long before the Merino, Italy was known not only for its art, but also its wool production. The Mausoleum of Galla contains a detailed mosaic from the fifth century showing *Christ the Good Shepherd. (Fig. 9) The sheep in this mosaic are small and fine boned. They have long necks, small wool-free heads and clean legs. In the early 1300's di Bondone Giottos' Joachim (Fig. 10) shows sheep, which are much like the mosaic, except Giottos have horns. Almost two hundred years later in 1482 Sandro Botticel and Domenico Ghirlandaio (Fig. 11, 12) paint not only white sheep, but also black ones. They are much the same as Giottos', but are larger and have "Roman" noses and larger drooping ears. Sanzio Raphael in 1507 paints hisMadonna and Lamb (Fig. 13) showing much the same type as those before, except his has high set ears.*

Suddenly, in 1580, we see a totally different type of sheep in Italian art. The sheep of Leandro Bessanos' *Moses Striking the Rock (Fig. 14) have short ears, coupled with very woolly faces and heads. Their wool is very long. The neck of the most visible lamb looks thick relative to its length, but its appearance may be from a wool-covered dewlap. This painting gives strong evidence that the Merino has begun to be an influential part of the Italian landscape.*

From 1200 to the present time the Merino sheep have brought wealth and improvement to the European Community. Even in a comparative study of Continental art, we cannot escape its presence. It has changed economies, landscapes, and images in art. From North Africa to Spain and from Spain to the New World, the revenues from the wool trade have financed countries and kingdoms, wars and explorations. Without the wealth of the Merino, Spain could not have invested in the risky exploration of a new sea route to India. This exploration paved the way for the discovery of the New World. Of all the animals that have made their mark on history, possibly none have so permanently or drastically altered the course of human endeavor, as has this humble sheep.

Footnotes:

(1) Strabo, *_Geography XII VII from LCL_, Roman Civilization Source Book II: The Empire, ed. Lewis and Reinhold (St. Louis: Reinhold, 1983), p. 156*

(2) Pliny the Elder, *Natural History, trans. H. Rackman, (London: Harvard University Press, 2000), book 18, p. 268*

(3) Greer, Thomas, *A Brief History of Western Man, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972), p. 153*

(4) Attenborough, David, *The First Eden, (Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1987), pp. 165, 165*

(5) Oklahoma State University Research Site on Sheep Breeds, Cheviot Entry, Copyright 1996, 1997, OSU.

Zoomorphics in Celtic Irish Illumination

By: Pamela Hewitt, the Harper

Zoomorphics In Celtic Irish Illumination

by Pamela Hewitt, the Harper
(Pamela S. Keightley)

The church of St. Mary and St. David at Kilpeck, Herfordshire England is one of the few Churches with Celtic decoration to escape the destruction of the Norman Conquers after 1066. Sheridan and Ross in Gargoyles & Grotesques, Paganism In the Medieval Church comment : "On balance there is far more pagan decoration in the church than Christian and one can only wonder therefore to what degree the beliefs of its first congregations are reflected in the images with which they surrounded themselves." (Sheridan and Ross, p. 118) It seems possible that the early Celts may have accepted Christ into the pantheon of their other gods with out discarding the old. The acceptance of the Pagan style of decoration on the churches suggests that the workman were working in an artistic vernacular with which they were familiar. Christian interpretations were grafted slowly upon Pagan traditions transforming pagan holidays into Christian Holidays. Christian interpretations for pagan art forms must have surely followed. There seems to be a conspiracy of silence in regard to the interpretation of Celtic Irish Illumination, especially in regard to the zoomorphic that skulk in the borders and capitals.

Some of these zoomorphics are readily identifiable as symbols of saints. St. Matthew is symbolized by a man. St. John has the eagle. St. Mark has the lion. St. Luke has the calf. Christ is identified with the peacock or phoenix. But this leaves several other creatures that need explanation. Carl Nordenfalk in Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Painting states that a new development in the zoomorphics occurs in the Book Of Lindisfarne.

"The artist provides his quadrupeds, still band-like, with dog's heads and realistically drawn hindquaters; at the same time he introduces a new species, a bird which, to judge by its hooked bill, trasus , and sharp claws, can only be a bird of prey, mostly likely a falcon. In other words, the two animals essential to the favorite pastimes of the Anglo-Saxon nobility, hunting and hawking, seem to be hinted at here. Whether this change in the vocabulary of Hiberno-Saxon ornament first occurred in secular art it is difficult to say, given the rarity of comparable non-religions objects. It may well have been an innovation of the great Lindisfarne bishop-artist. (Nordenfalk, p.17)

The island of Lindisfarne is off the north eastern coast of England. Why would monks who have dedicated their lives to Christ and retreated from the world decorate their manuscripts with hawks and hounds symbols of the nobilities pleasures? My suggestion is that this is because the creatures symbolize the

Zoomorphics in Celtic Irish Illumination

monks themselves. Are hawks and hounds hunting for the souls of men. As hawks, do they go forth as missionaries, but return to their monasteries to the lure of "Eternal Salvation." These creatures are not only entangled in Celtic Knot work, but also seem to be consuming it. If the knot work is interpreted as representing Christ's love and the Gospels themselves, it is easy to understand why the hawks and hounds are consuming it. Other figures that support this interpretation are the pairs of beard tuggers that appear. Again if these are interpreted as representing the monks themselves, then it represents the futility of the monks contending with each other. This perhaps represents a Celtic Image of "turning the other cheek." Pairs of figures with interlaced tongues might represent the futility of slandering your brother monk since you are only deriding yourself. Hiberno-Saxon manuscripts show an astonishing amount of imitation and sharing of ideas to the point that it is possible to refer to them simply as Celtic. To trace the origins of Celtic art it is necessary to encompass the globe. Indian, Egyptian, Germanic and Viking influences are all possible contributors to the development of Celtic Illumination. Francis Henry of University College, Dublin, Ireland in his article "The Effects of the Viking Invasions On Irish Art" gives us some insight into the origins of Celtic Knot work. He directs our attention to the famous Irish carving on a sarcophagus found at the rock of Cashel and which is now in Cormac's Chapel.

"It has, or at least it had when it was complete, a zoomorphic decoration consisting essentially in two monsters superimposed on each other, one turned towards the right, the other towards the left. They are caught in a network of sinuous lines made by the bodies of several snakes and we must remember that the "great beast" with snakes is one of the outstanding motifs of Scandinavian art from the late tenth century on." (Henry, p. 64)

It should be noted that the great beast appears to consume the snakes. Similar decoration appears an many Celtic manuscripts. Brown describes these:

"These consist of abstract symbols (sometimes resembling dumb-bells) or little beasts or figures. In the Book of Cern (a Mercian book of c. 820-40) these form a menagerie of brontosaurus-like creatures (unkindly described as 'pretentious worms') which batten happily on the surrounding script. These devises also feature prominently in the Book of Kells and from the 9th century, became very popular in Ireland." (Brown, P. 58)

In Irish manuscripts a creature that frequently replaces the great beast and the pretentious worms is the dog. The appearance of the dogs is one of the major feature that distinguishes Irish art. Attempting to determine the origin of an Irish missal probably dating from the 12th century, Henry comments: "..one would know it at first sight as Irish, because of the heads of the animals which are the stubborn little dog profiles of innumerable Irish initials." (Brown, p.71) If once again, we apply the principal that the dogs represent the monks themselves, we can now look into Irish Legend to further elucidate the appropriateness of using the hound as a symbol for the Christian Monk.

In the Red Branch Cycle the boy Setanta arrives late at his host house. He is attacked by a monstrous dog, which he kills. He is mortified to find out that it is his host's guard dog and offers to take the dog's place until a replacement can be found. Setanta takes the name Chuchlain which means the Hound of Chulain. In adulthood, he is known as the dreaded Hound of Ulster.

Once again the monks are not only Hounds for Christ, but for Ireland as well. This possible transformation shows yet again how pagan traditions can be remade for Christian purposes.

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Cats in the Middle Ages

By: Sister Mairi Jean, admirer of cats

Cats in the Middle Ages
by Sister Mairi Jean, admirer of cats

If you require your persona to have a cat you should probably know a bit of feline history as well as what breeds are available to you. Quite a lot of breeds popular today are relatively new and others were only available in certain countries.

Medieval Europe

Cats were brought to Europe by the Romans in the small BCs and were tolerated as vermin catchers in the Mediterranean region. Cats never really caught on in Greece where weasels were used as rat catchers, but the Romans were quite fond of them. The early Christian church did not like cats, there were too many links with paganism, but ordinary folk admired them and their rat catching prowess. Despite official disapproval, St Patrick and Pope Gregory the Great were known to have pet cats and St Agatha and St Gertrude are associated with cats. In the 13th century there was an up surging of paganism in the Rhinelands and serious persecution of cats began as a battle between the Christians and the pagans; this lasted 450 years and resulted in the deaths of thousands of cats, In the reigns of Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I of England cats were publicly burned as symbols of heresy, both Protestant and Catholic. Cats (mackerel, not black) were also suspected as being the familiars of witches.

Medieval Asia

The Muslim religion has never had anything against cats, even the Prophet tried not to disturb sleeping cats. There are many favourable legends in Asia, especially in Thailand and surrounding areas. When cats were introduced to Japan they were pampered like lapdogs, encouraging vast growth in the rodent populations. Many of the popular breeds come from Asia, although domestication occurred there long after it did in Africa.

Cats available in the Middle Ages:

<u>Common:</u>

European shorthairs: These existed all over Europe and were mostly tabby, indicating their close relationship to the European wild cat. Solid colours were available if you looked really hard. Tabbies occur as tiger-striped (mackerel), swirly (classic) and spotted.

<u>Less Common</u>

Abyssinians: These are related to the African wildcat and are a very old breed, but were not widespread in Europe until modern times.

Angoras: This is an ancient Turkish longhair. It has fallen out of popularity in modern times in favour of the Persian, but was the first longhair in Europe, probably brought in by the Crusaders. It was very popular until the late Middle ages. In Turkey a true Angora must have odd eyes.

<u>Very Rare</u>

Egyptian Mau: This is probably the oldest breed in the world, but Egypt discouraged export of them and as such you would have to have contacts in all the right places to get your hands on one. Very elegant breed; Mau means cat.

<u>Available in Specific Locations -</u>

Siamese: Very old breed in Thailand, but were not exported to Europe until modern times.

Persians: Probably introduced to Europe in about 1550 through Italy and then France. Only a few colours were in existence then, i.e. blue, grey and tabby

Birman: There is controversy about this breed. It could be an old South-East Asian breed, or a modern French breed. There's a long involved story about a goddess making them look the way they do because they protected her temple from Raiders, but a lot of people think that it is all untrue and that the breed is modern. You choose.

Chartreux: This is referred to as early as 1558 and is a French breed. It was apparently bred by Carthusian monks.

Manx: Legends abound about this ancient breed. They were found solely on the Isle of Man during the Middle Ages and are subject to spinal problems and many die young.

Japanese Bobtail: Only found in Japan, and only from about 1000 AD.

So your 14th century Irish monk could not possibly have had a Birmese kitten, nor could a 7th century Italian dignitary possibly have had a Japanese Bobtail. A trader in London would have had a hard time getting hold of an Abyssinian, but his Italian counterpart could have arranged it.

A queen in central Europe might have been able to get an Egyptian Mau, but her ladies in waiting would have to settle for a European Shorthair. I don't think anyone in the Shire has actually gone as far as to plan pets, but should you wish to do so, nothing now stands in your way.

Sister Mairi Jean

Shire of Adamastor

Kingdom of Drachenwald.

Feathered Gold, Golden Feathers

By: Lord Daniel Raoul le Vascon

Feathered Gold, Golden Feathers
by Ld. Daniel Raoul le Vascon.

This is a very strange story indeed. It began when the Spanish conquered what were then called the Fortunate Islands late in the 15th century. These were lush tropical islands off the west Coast of Africa. Upon these islands lived some very small but very cheerful little golden birds.

All over Europe the Spanish sold these happy little birds as pets. Being very crafty merchants they sold only male birds. The fame of these birds quickly spread and everyone who was anyone wanted one for their very own. As a result the price of the birds went up and up and up.

The clever Spanish merchants kept the origin of the melodious little birds very mysterious. They spread the tale that the birds had to be gotten at great price from a far distant land. The truth was the Spanish were hatching them out in secret in Spain.

The Spanish maintained their grip on the supply of the birds until 1622 when a ship coming to Spain, carrying both male and female birds, sank at sea. Thousands of birds escaped drowning and flew to the nearby Isle of Elba. The birds were quite happy in their new home. They made nests and thrived. In due time the birds in their new home were discovered by passing French and Italian travelers. These travelers recognized them and quickly captured some as pets. The Spanish hold on the market was thus undone. The little golden birds, like the islands from which they came, are now called Canaries.

from:

"A Browsers Book of Beginnings", Charles Panati, 1984, Houston Mifflin Company, 2

A Historic Look at the Sport of Angling

By: Creador TwineDragon

A Historic Look at the Sport of Angling
by Creador TwineDragon

presented at Pennsic 26 A.S. 32

Thus have I proved, according to my purpose, that the sport and game of angling is the true means and cause that brings a man into a merry spirit, which (according to the said proverb of Solomon and the said teachings of medicine) makes a flowering of age and a long one. And therefore to all you that are virtuous, gentle and freeborn, I write and make this simple treatise which follows, by which you can have the whole art of angling to amuse you as you please. in order that your age may flourish the more and last the longer.

from the modernized text of

The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle (from the second ***Book of St. Albans:*** *1496)*

The purpose of this handout is to give an introduction to the history of angling as a sport, along with a brief description of the tools used in the sport, including some general notes on the skills and technics used to create these tools.

There has been more written about the sport of fishing, than any other sport known to man.

The Well Tempered Angler by Arnold Gingrich 1965

A BRIEF HISTORY OF ANGLING

Angling is the technique of catching fish using a rod and a line, thus called angling due to the angle formed by the rod and line. The sport of angling is when someone angles for enjoyment without the need of fish for food or commerce (though bringing home your days catch for dinner is a bonus for being a good angler). Often when fishing an angler would attempt to catch only one type of fish, many times limiting his equipment to increase the sport.

Ancient pictographs dating form about 2000 B.C. show us that the first people to angle were the Egyptians, and it was also the ancient Egyptians who first enjoyed angling as a sport, as seen from a drawing dat ing from 1400 B. C. which depicts an Egyptian !1ot>le angling in a elegant pond. The Greeks. who were avid writers on fishing, tell us about the sport of angling and give us some of the earliest accounts of the equipment used for angling. It appears that the Romans did not hold the sport of angling in high regard since there is mention that angling was an activity for women and not a fitting sport for men.

In the orient there are writings from the *I Ching telling us of the Chinese people angling for sport as early as the eleventh century B.C. and in the first century A.D. the Emperor Wu was said to go angling using a white silk line, a gold hook and a gold fish as bait, without making any attempt at actually catching any fish, but to just enjoy the pastime. In the seventh and eighth centuries many Japanese nobles built pavilions on their estates, just so they could enjoy the sport of angling. In Europe, from the time of the Romans through the fifteenth century, there was not much written about angling, only a few brief references and several manuscript pictures give any indication of the art of angling. This changed at the end of the fifteenth century with the release of a few publications on the subject. The most important and influential of these was The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle believed to have been written sometime before 1450 and was possibly a copy of an earlier work. It was first published in the second Book of St. Albans in 1496. The Treatise was added to the Book of St. Albans with the intention of the book being for the gentry, as to keep the knowledge from commoners so they would not ruin the sport. Though the Treatise was later published in pamphlet form for all to have.*

Even though there were other publications on angling at the time of the *Book of St. Albans and several more after, The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle was the most in depth study on the tools, techniques and attributes used in the sport of angling. It set the standard of angling for the next 200 years and was the foundation for most writings on the sport there after and The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle not only was concerned with the equipment needed for the sport, but also with the attitude of the angler. Thus the Treatise is the primary source of information for this handout and wi11 be referenced throughout.*

A Historic Look at the Sport of Angling

TOOLS, TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT

If you want to be crafty in angling, you must first learn to make your tackle.

modernized text of the first printed version of *The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle (from the second* ***Book of St. Albans:*** *1496)*

Using properly prepared equipment is important to the success of the angler. There are three pieces of equipment necessary to the sport of angling, these are the rod, line and hooks.

The first piece of equipment to be discussed is the rod. The rod was made from various materials, depending on the region in question. From all indications the cane rod was used in southern Europe from the time of the Greeks, these rods varied in length and thickness depending on the type of fish being angled for. In the orient, the rods were made from bamboo, which measured from between twelve and fifteen feet in length. Since bamboo was unavailable and the cane or reed in the region was too brittle, in northern Europe the rods were made of flexible, light weight wood and measured between twelve and eighteen feet in length.

The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle describes a rod of three sections, fitted together to form the rod. The bottom section was a staff as thick as ones arm, measuring from six to nine feet and could be made from hazel, willow or aspen. If these woods are hard to obtain, ash is an acceptable saubstitute. This staff was to be cut between Michaelmas (September 29th) and Candlemas (February 2nd), this is so that the sap from the tree would not be in the staff and hamper the curing process. Once cut, the staff is steamed and straightened, then cured. After the staff is cured, it is shaped and tapered, then taking heated wire and metal rods it is bored out. The staff is then ferruled at both ends with iron or latten (fine brass) bands, so as to keep it from splitting.

The middle section, which is to be cut at the same time as the lower staff, is to be of hazel, but fir or maple may also be used. This section of about four feet must also be steamed, straightened, cured and then shaped. In shaping this section be sure that the bottom of it fits snugly in the hole bored in the bottom section, a hands breadth from its narrow end.

The top section, which also measures about four feet (the middle and top sections when spliced together should not be longer than length of the bottom staff) and is to be cut in the same season can be of blackthorn, crabtree, medlar or juniper will also need to be soaked and straightened. Once the middle and upper sections are ready, they are spliced and lashed together being sure that it will pass through the hole in the lower staff. Once this upper section is completed, wrap it with a six hair line (see fishing line section for description) from the tip to where it is lashed, leaving a loop at the tip to tie the fishing line to. When completed the upper section should fit inside the bottom section and with a running device can be drawn in and out. Ofhen the rod is fully extended it will measure between twelve and eighteen feet in length, though this may seem overly long. it was light weight and easy to wield. This great length was also important for increased casting distance and for reducing the stress on the line when landing a large fish. It should be noted, that by the end of the sixteenth century, rods could be purchased in tackle shops which was a steadily growing industry as more and more people took up the sport of angling.

The fishing line is the next pieces of tackle needed by an angler and probably the most involved to create. There is mention of several different materials used as fishing line. One was made from the same plant which linen was made from. Also mentioned was silk (especially in the orient) and green silk, which is made from the gut of the silk worm (and is much more durable in water than regular silk). But, the primary source for fishing line from the time of the ancient Greeks and was still in use in the nineteenth century was the hair from the tail of the horse.

The color of the hair was important, it must be white, this is due to the fact that white tail hair has a far greater elasticity than other colors of hair and was less likely to snap under pressure. Plutarch in his writings from the second half of the first century, tells us to use the white hair from the tail of a stallion first, the gelding next, and the mare the least, this is because the mare urinates on her tai1 and the urine wiII weaken the fibers of the hair and thus weaken the line. Plutarch also writes of keeping the line white and with few knots, so when the fish looks up at the line it will blend with the sky and will not startle the fish. *The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle tells us to dye our*

A Historic Look at the Sport of Angling

lines to match the water so as not to startle the fish. This difference of opinion still goes on to this day.

The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle gives the most in-depth information on creating fishing line. The first step is to inspect the horse tail hair for splits, frays and imperfections which may weaken the line. Then dividing the tail into six bundles, each of these bundles of hair are dyed a different

color: yellow, green, brown, tawny, russet and a dusky color. Each of these colors was for different types of water conditions being fished. The Treatise gives excellent dye recipes for each of these colors, but are too long to include in this handout.

Once the hair is dyed, it is plaited (plaiting is similar to braiding but without any additional twisting) into different weight lines using a various number of hairs depending upon the type of fish being angled for, one hair for the smallest and up to fifteen hairs for the largest. It has also been recommended that weaving in a thin wire when fishing for very large fish. The plaiting process was done on a line tying tool, which greatly assists in the making of any line greater than a one hair line. A few points should be made about weaving the line, the first is when plaiting the line, do not make it too tight or the line will snap easily. The second is to make sure your knots are secure and trimmed neatly. Finally, occasionally wetting the hair while plaiting will you to get a much more even line, since the hairs will become more supple.

As a final note, a fishing line made from three hairs, when tested, was equal to between three and five pound test line and a six hair line, tested at between four and seven pound test 1ine. When finished, horse hair line is surprisingly similar in look and feel to modern braided fishing line.

A **Line Tying Tool**

The third main piece of tackle is the hook. and which is probably the most difficult piece of equipment to make properly. Throughout history. hooks have been made from many different materials, wood, horn and bone, brass in Egypt and eventually iron and steel. On the European mainland hooks appeared to be made from wire and even early on had eyelets. This varies greatly with the hooks described by *The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle in England. These hooks were made from other metal items and had no eyelets. To attach these hooks to the line, a leader was lashed onto the hook with silk thread.*

The process for making hooks described in *The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle is difficult for two reasons. The first is that the hooks must be properly tempered, if not they may bend easily or they may be brittle and snap when a fish strikes. The other reason for the difficulty, is that the metal items*

described are not readily available today and must be made. These reasons aside, the process seems fairly straight forward.

The Treatise describes making fish hooks from fine square needles for smaller fish and using larger needles for larger and larger fish, until the largest hooks are made from shoemaker awls for the largest fish such as pike.

The process describes first heating the needle (or whatever is being used for the hook), then letting it cool to reduce its temper. When the needle is cool enough to handle. use a sharp knife lift the barb, then file the point sharp. Reheating the needle, it is then bent into the proper shape and the top of the shank is hammered into a flange. This flange is then filed to remove any brays which may cut the line. Once all this is done, the hook is heated once again and quenched to reset its temper.

The need to make hooks changed during the sixteenth century with the rise of the new industry of needle making. which quickly turned to making hooks. Like the fishing rod, hooks were available for purchase at tackle shops.

These three pieces of tackle is all that is needed (besides bait) to enjoy the sport of angling, but there is more tackle which can be created to increase the skill of the angler. These are bobbers, weights and flies.

The bobber is of great assistance when bait fishing, and probably the easiest piece of tackle to make. The bobber described in *The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle is made of cork. This imported wood comes from a tree in the south of Spain. It is best to first shape the cork with a sharp knife into an egg or acorn shape. Then finish shaping and smoothing the bobber on a grinding wheel. The final shape is one that is larger on top than on the bottom, so as to sit in the water properly. Once the bobber is*

A Historic Look at the Sport of Angling

shaped, take a sharp, heated wire and bore a hole in the bobber from top to bottom. After this hole is bored and cool, place a feather quill within, this will ease in putting the line through. It is advised that bobbers of several different sizes be made, from as small as a pea to as large as a walnut.

Later writings describe bobbers made from several quills tied together, and the general opinion is that this bobber is the better, since it is more sensitive to a fish striking the bait. Whichever bobber is used, be sure to use one the correct size for the thickness of line and the type of fish being angled for.

The next piece of tackle which is very useful is the lead weight. *The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle describes a weight, which is exactly the same as the slip shot weight used today. The Treatise does not describe how to make them, all that the Treatise does mention is taking balls of lead and putting a cut in them using a knife, so that they may be placed on the line. There are several different methods for making these balls.*

The first is from a mold, next is by using the drop method, and finally by pouring the molten lead into holes drilled into a board. There are several pieces of advice in using each of these methods. When casting the lead in a mold, be sure that there is no water present, because when molten lead hits water it may cause a small explosion. The drop method is done by allowing drops of molten lead to fall several feet into a bucket of water. The ball is formed by the fall simi lal' to that of a raindrop. As with casting, be sure that you drop the molten lead far enough from the water, so that it has a chance to coo before hitting the water, so that an explosion won't occur shooting hot lead all over. The final process is accomplished by poring the molten lead into a block of wood. With this be careful of the wood catching fire from the hot lead. After the lead cools it is then pried from the wood and is ready for the final stage. No matter which method is used, the balls will need to be trimmed with a knife and then shaped by light tapping with a hanuner. It is important that the balls are round and smooth, so as to not get caught on underwater obstructions. Also, use very pure lead, this is due to the fact that lead with inclusions such as tin is not pliable enough to use and is very hard to work with. The most important note of all is that lead is very harmful and can build up in your system, so take all the precautions possible when working with it.

Now for the shapes and proportions of these flies, it is impossible to describe them without painting, therefore you shall take of these several flies alive and laying them before you, try how near your Art can come unto nature by an equal shapes and mixture of colors.

from *A Discourse on the General Art of Fishing by Gervase Markham 1614*

The art of angling with an artificial fly dates back to the third century B.C. by the Macedonians, and the art of fly-fishing continues to this day. The artificial fly takes the most skill to make and use properly, which is why it is considered the height of the sport of angling. Angling with a fly won't increase an anglers chance of catching fish but it will increase his enjoyment of the sport.

The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle describes twelve flies made of dyed wool, silk thread and feathers. The twelve flies are designed to resemble insects which the fish feed of during a particular times of the year.

The list of flies is as follows; The Dun Fly and Another Dun Fly to be used throughout March, for April there is The Stone Fly and one called A Good Fly is for the beginning of May. The Yellow Fly and The Black Leaper are for the whole month of May. There are three flies for the month of June, these are The Dun Cut, The Maure Fly and The Tandy Fly. For the month of July there are The Wasp Fly and The Shell Fly. Finally, for August There is The Drake Fly.

The Treatise describes what each fly is made from, and there is too much information to be covered in this handout. If you wish to try to make them yourself, it is recommended

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that you get a book on modern fly tying, to better understand the terms and technics of tying flies.

In Europe the fly was used for catching trout, grayling and salmon. Here in AEthelmearc, the fly can also be used to catch panfish and bass. It became apparent by the end of the sixteenth century that there were many more fly designs than those listed in the Treatise, this invites us to create our own designs for the different types of fish and the different waters we may fish in.

There are several other pieces of equipment, which *The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle does not mention and are very useful. Some of these are the net, a spool to keep your line on, various containers to keep your bait and the fish you caught, and a weeding ring (This device was used to free a fish on your line when it has swum into the weeds). All of these pieces of equipment were in use around the time of the Treatise and can either be seen in pictures or are described in various writings.*

Now that the tackle needed for angling has been discussed, there is one more item needed for the sport of angling and that is bait. Strangely enough, baits seem to be the one topic which was frequently written about. It seems that each author had a different opinion and recipes for bait, many of these of the strangest concoctions, offering everything from poisons to blessings. To try to discuss all the baits possible and their various uses would require a whole other handout if not a book. The best advice is to talk to other anglers familiar with the area you wish to fish and find out which bait is working best.

I hope the information in this handout is of assistance to all who read it, and that it may at least pique a few gentle's interest to try the sport of angling for themselves. If you do try the sport, I wish you the best of luck.

Creador TwineDragon

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The Origins of Angling by John McDonald. 1954 Doubleday & Company Library of Congress #63-11120

This is it, the most concise book on *The Treatise of Fishing with an Angle, with a thorough history of the Treatise and its authorship, a complete modernized text of both the manuscript and printed versions of the Treatise, along with manuscript. It also includes a study of the flies described in the Treatise. If you can only get one book, get this one.*

The Secrets of Angling by John Denny 1613

This book, written in prose in 1609, may be a little difficult to read, but gives us much of the angling knowledge of the sixteenth century.

A History of Fly Fishing for Trout by John Waller Hills. 1912 Freshet Press Library of Congress #78-175053

John Waller Hills was a recognized authority on the sport of angling, and this book is an excellent study on the history and progression of fly fishing.

The Fishing in Print: A Guided Tour Through Five Centuries of Angling Literature by Arnold Gingrich 1974 Winchester Press ISBN 01- 695- 80389-1

A good book on the history of literature on the sport of angling. This book is an excellent reference source for further research.

A History of Angling by Charles Chenevix Trench Follet Publishing Company

An excellent study of angling through the ages, with pictures seldom seen elsewhere. A very good reference source for further research.

Fishing from the Earliest Times by William Radcliffe. 1921 Ares Publishers Inc. Library of Congress #0-89005-008-2

If you are interested in the ancient history of angling literature, this is the book, though it is a difficult read.

Creador TwineDragon is Doug Dillon 5644 Valleyview Dr. Bethel Park, PA 15102

If you are interested in more information or wish to share ideas, please feel free to contact me at the address above. Sorry I'm not on line yet.

White Ferrets, Genets, Virgins and Unicorns

By: Pamela Hewitt, the Harper

White Ferrets, Genets, Virgins And Unicorns

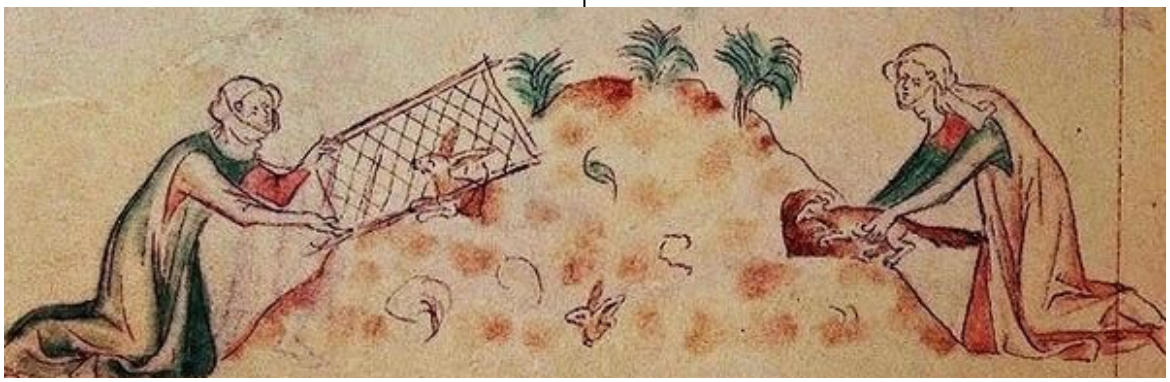
by Pamela Hewitt, the Harper (Pamela K. Hughes)

Domesticated ferrets have been with man for a very long time. Pre-historic camp sites have yielded the bones of ferrets. Shards of pottery from ancient Greece depict ferrets and Greek plays mention them. Cats from Egypt began replacing ferrets as household mousers, but ferrets remained superior to cats. Their small size allowed them to enter small spaces and battle with the rodent on their own ground. Rabbit hunting with ferrets and purse nets was the best ways to catch rabbits before the invention of fire arms. Rabbit hunting with ferrets was common in England during World War II due to meat rationing and is experiencing a resurgence. Up until the turn of the 19th century, ferrets remained one of man's best alleys for eradicating rats, mice and rabbits. The use of ferrets declined with the invention of inexpensive baits. Currently, the number of ferrets kept as pets in the United States is not far behind dogs and cats.

Documentation for ferreting during the Middle Ages is spotty and in need of vast improvement. There are many period hunting manuals that deal with hawks, but, at the moment, only Gaston Phoebus' The Hunting Book (14th century) is known to briefly touch on the subject of using ferrets for rabbit hunting. Three tapestries: Rabbit Hunting With Ferrets (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco), The Ferret Hunt Tapestry (Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum) and A Peasants' Picnic (Musee du Louvre, Paris) also depict rabbit hunting with ferrets, purse nets and dogs (to catch any rabbit that escaped the nets). This need for further documentation offers the opportunity for extensive original research.

Ferrets are a domesticated species of weasels. Weasels form a rather large Family of animals, the Mustelidae. It's Sub-Family Mustelinae contains 34 species. These include the grisons, martens, mink, polecats and weasels. They are terrestrial hunters of small vertebrates, although some such as the martens are excellent climbers. Active at night, weasels generally hunt alone, capturing rodents, fish, frogs, birds and birds' eggs. Impinging on Man's domain, smaller members of the weasel family earned the French name "Poulechat" which means "chicken (killing) cat." This became Anglicized to Polecat and several members of the weasel family are commonly referred to as polecats. The domestic ferret is related to these polecats and can interbreed with some of them. The ferret's skeletal features most closely resemble the Steppe Polecat, Mustela evermanni and the European polecat, Mustela putorius. The domestic ferret is classified as Mustela putorius furo. A theif in Latin is "furoneum." Ferrets are notorious for stealing and hording small objects and food. The word ferret may also come from this Latin root. The correct word for a group of ferrets is "a business of Ferrets."

Lacking Carolus Linnaeus system of classification for animals (which was not invented until 1735), the Medieval naturalist foundered in a welter of terminology and misinformation. Ferrets were called: fitch, fitchet, poley, stinkmart, stinkmarten, foulmart, foulmartin, foumart, and fulimart. (The latter names refer to the ferrets characteristic musky odor.) To further confuse the issue, a white domestic ferret was developed and was preferred by many for hunting. This was because the white ferret was easier for hawks and hounds to distinguish from its wild cousins, polecats. Ferret fur was sold as fitch. White ferret fur is difficult to distinguish from another species of weasel, the ermine. The ermine is the same animal as the stoat. During the summer, the stoat is brown



White Ferrets, Genets, Virgins and Unicorns

with a white underside. During the winter, the stoat turns white with a black tip of the tail. Ermine pelts were decorated with the black tails which explains the spotted effect on royal garments. During medieval times it seems likely that white ferret pelts may have been substituted for ermine.

The confusion about what is a white ferret and what is an ermine is apparent when examining works of art. For example, Leonardo Da Vinci's picture of a Lady with an Ermine could just as well be a portrait of a lady with a white ferret. There is a portrait of Queen Elizabeth I with an Ermine. Curiously, this ermine wears the same black spots created by the black tails sewn on ermine pelts. Or is it another creature? Margaret Freeman in The Unicorn Tapestries describes a mythological creature called a Genet. The Genet is described as being white and having spots with a black bands on its tail. The genet also appears in the Unicorn Tapestries, at the Cloisters Museum in New York City and is pictured close to the unicorn as it dips it horn into stream from a fountain. The genet also appears in the Lady with the Unicorn Tapestries (Musee de Cluny, Paris) titled: "Sight." A wood cut in the Bible published by Antoine Verard of Paris 1500 also shows a genet at the foot of Eve in the Garden of Eden. The appearance of the genet with Queen Elizabeth, The Lady with the Unicorn and Eve are not a mistake, but an example of artistic metaphor.

According to Freeman, during the Middle Ages, Guillaume Le Clerc and others report that the weasel is a great marvel because "she receives by mouth the seed whereby she conceives," and "by the ear brings forth" her young. In essence, the weasel remains a technical virgin. This mythology explains the presence of a weasel like creature in a portrait of Queen Elizabeth I with an "Ermine." The presence of the weasel iconographicly emphasis her virginity. The presence of the Genet has the same effect for the Lady with the Unicorn and Eve. Unicorns are also symbolic of virginity, because according to legend, only a virgin can capture a Unicorn. White weasels, ferrets or genets often appear in associated with Virgins and Unicorns. One might legitimately ask how the legends of about weasels, genets and unicorns got started. The unicorn, the genet and other mythological creatures are found in the various "natural history" collections dating form the Greeks to Gesner's Historia Animalium (1555). It seems probable that a combination of misinformation and rumor may have been compounded by repeated collection and repetition until the existence of these mythical animals were accepted as fact. Some of the mythical animals may have been based upon distorted reports of real animals. In Exotic Zoology, Willy Ley explains how a real creature, the rhinoceros, may have started the legend of the unicorn. A traveler attempting to describe the rhinoceros, he might say it looked rather like a horse with a horn in the middle of its forehead. Which explains the unicorn's horse like appearance. According to legend a Unicorn's horn could detect poison in a cup of wine. Lacking a real rhinoceros horn, greedy entrepreneurs presented the narwhal's's tusk as the Unicorn horn. Distortion and misinformation created the unicorn.

As for the genet, Freeman may be mistaken about its being a legendary creature. One species of weasel, the North African spotted weasel (Poecilictis libyca) is described as black-and-white spotted and having a stripped tail like the genet. It is described as also having strips on its back and face. Since its species name is "libyca" could this be the creature described by Strabo? Mckay states that a Greek historian and geographer, Strabo, in his book Geographica (about 20AD) writes about an animal in Libya which was bred in captivity for hunting rabbits. It was used to bolt the rabbits like a ferret and could be dragged out of the burrow on a lead still hanging on to the rabbit with its claws since it was muzzled. Perhaps an albino variety of the North African spotted weasel was the creature that started the legend of the genet.

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Beekeeping in Anglo-Saxon-Norman England

By: Baroness Morgan of Anglesey

Beekeeping in Anglo-Saxon/Norman England

by Baroness Morgan of Anglesey

In the next few pages I hope to answer some of the questions about beekeeping in Anglo-Saxon/Norman England and in our world today. We will look at who kept bees, what they kept bees in, how they cared for them, and how they harvested honey and wax. First we'll take a look at the pre-history of our friends Apis Mellifera, the only honey bee native to Europe.

Social honey bees precede humans on earth by ten to twenty million years. Primeval humans gathered and ate the honey and honeycomb of wild bees as far back as 7000 BC as evidenced by cave paintings in northern Spain. In ancient Egypt, the hieroglyph of a bee was used extensively as a symbol of the nation and the Pharaoh. Actual examples of hives made of pottery exist from Ancient Greece and there are writings from Ancient Rome on bees and beekeeping.

As far as the presence of honeybees in Britain, it is believed they may have been present on the island by 5500 BCE. This assumption is based on the presence of hazel in archeological finds, which has been regarded as an indicator of honeybee survival in Scandinavia. In addition, analysis of pottery shards found in Neolithic levels at Runnymede Bridge showed the presence of beeswax, glucose and honey. These were dated to 3000-2650 BC.

During the period of our interest, several years before and after 1066, there is quite a bit of documentation regarding bees and beekeeping. In reference to the introduction of beekeeping in England, Dr. Eva Crane states in her book "The World History of Beekeeping and Honey Hunting" that "hive beekeeping was almost certainly introduced in the east of England from continental Europe and transmitted through Britain from East to West." There is no definitive date for when the introduction occurred but it is believed to be prior to Roman occupation as there is no archeological or written evidence of Roman influence on beekeeping practices or equipment.

In Anglo-Saxon England there were extensive laws written down between the reigns of Kings Ina, Alfred, and Edward the Confessor between the years 700 and 1050. Some of those laws dealt with the punishment meted out to those who stole from beekeepers but there is no information about beekeeping itself except the mention of honey measurements in sextars and tubs which leads us to conclude they had liquid honey. "Rectitudines Singularum Personarum", dating from 1000 AD, contains descriptions of duties and benefits of various occupations or stations, including that of "beo ceorl" (beekeeper) who belonged to the lowest rank of free men, listed with the swineherd, and owed his Lord all the work other vassals did. As a vassal, his bees and the land they were on belonged to the Lord, he held them by virtue of his job description alone, and reverted to his Lord upon his death. If his land was good, he was required to have a horse which would allow him to tend the hives located on all his Lord's lands.

According to Fraser in his "History of Beekeeping in England", "the Anglo Saxons had invaded a land in which beekeeping in wicker hives had been practiced from time immemorial, having continued unchanged through the Roman occupation. Up to the present no evidence has been produced that the Anglo-Saxons themselves changed it in any way, except for the introduction of the straw skep in East Anglia." As we will see, the Norman's knew a good thing when they saw it as they would continue the successful beekeeping practices they found in England.

Certainly one of the most comprehensive sources for the time of the Norman Conquest of England is the Domesday Book. First, let's define some of the terminology used in the five volumes that make up the Domesday Book.

The term most commonly used for the actual person who kept the bees and harvested the honey and wax was *custos apium. In addition, the term melittarii is used to describe people involved in beekeeping. The word translates to "honeyers" but it is unclear as to exactly what these people did although it has been argued that they may have harvested wild bee honey from the forests as opposed to keeping bees in hives. This type of beekeeping, called forest beekeeping, was practiced extensively during this period in the densely wooded areas on the European Continent. But there is little evidence that it was widely practice in England.*

Terms in the Domesday for the beekeeping equipment in Herefordshire include *vascula, which would have been a small hive, perhaps made of*

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wicker. Vasa apum is also used to describe the hives in Huntingdonshire and other eastern counties. These were probably the larger straw skeps that we are familiar with. The term rusca, wicker hives possibly covered with tree bark, is used to describe the hives in Suffolk. The earliest archeological evidence of the types of hives noted in the Domesday include the remains of a coiled straw skep from Coppergate dated to the twelfth century and what is believed to be a part of a wicker hive found in Lower Saxony dated to 0-200 AD. (Crane, 1983)

We can look to other sources of information on beekeeping from this time period. There were several books on husbandry written around this time that contain information on beekeeping. One such book, written in the 1200's, "Ceo est hosebonderie*", by an unknown author, sheds some light on the beekeeping practices of the time (Fraser, 1958).*

"Each of hive of bees ought to give every year [swarms] for two hives on the average, for some give none, and others give three or four a year And in some places they are given nothing at all to eat in the winter, and in some they are fed; and where they are fed it is possible to maintain eight hives right through the winter on a gallon of honey; and if you collect the honey every other year, you would have two gallons of honey from each hive."

This appears to be instruction on the care of hives through the winter as well as what one might expect by way of honey production.

Another important work of the time was "De Naturis Rerum", an encyclopedia of learning of the time by Alexander Neckham (1157-1217). Unfortunately Neckham turned to the tomes of antiquity for his beekeeping information so his writing sheds no light on practices of his time. He does write that the bees supply him with moral lessons: they begin life as legless grubs and finally rise to the possession of wings, they are chaste, obedient to their King, and have all things in common – they are in fact typical monks.

This leads us to the actual practice of beekeeping in 1066 England. We know from the Domesday entries that most custos apium, the beekeeper, kept their bees in skeps, either wicker or coiled straw. They would have most likely practiced a form of beekeeping called swarm beekeeping which developed as a result of the cooler climate. The main honey flows occur in the mid to late summer in the cool temperate zone. Swarm beekeeping depended on the production and hiving of bee swarms in early summer, which stored additional honey from the late flows. The beekeeper of this time would have kept his bees in small hives. These small hives would encourage the colony of bees living inside to split off into two colonies when their hive becomes over crowded thus ensuring the survival of the colony. As a bee hive swarms, the old queen bee takes half the colony out of the over crowded hive in search of a new home. The beekeeper would have to be on his toes to follow the swarm and get them into one of his skeps to return it to the bee yard thus increasing his number of hives and ultimately the amount of honey he can produce. At the end of the honey flow he would take the honey from the lightest hives, as they were likely to starve during the winter and the heaviest hives, as they had produced the most honey. The beekeeper would winter over the hives of medium weight taking no honey from them as they would need this honey to survive the winter. These hives were needed to start the whole process over again in the spring. Those hives that were chosen to be harvested were most likely doomed to a smoky death. The beekeeper would probably have used sulphur fumes to kill the bees before taking the honey and wax. From the record available it would appear that most of the honey produced was in liquid form although there are some records of comb honey being sold. The honey was used as a sweetener in cooking, and to make mead, and other drinks. In addition, the records of sales of wax are plentiful. The common uses were candles, seals and cere cloth, a cloth that was soaked in wax used in burials.

I have not found any evidence of protective equipment being used by the beekeeper during this time period. The earliest evidence of purpose-made protection against stings on the head and face appeared in Western Europe about 1400 in an illuminated manuscript. Modern beekeepers often opt for working with bare hands as a sting on the hand is worth the added dexterity in handling the hive, so I assume the medieval beekeeper may have chosen the same trade off. But working without face protection must have been a painful endeavor if indeed he performed his duties without said protection.

Let us now turn our attention to today and

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some details about modern beekeeping. Hives today don't look much like the wicker skeps of 1066 but the bees still produce the same wonderful honey and golden wax. First we will let's take a look at the residents of the hive, the drone, the worker and the queen.

The drone is the male bee. He does nothing but lay around, eat honey and wait for a warm sunny day to go fly around and hunt a young queen to mate with. If they do mate, they die immediately after. If any drones are still alive in the hive when the cooler fall weather sets in, they will be ejected from the hive by whatever means necessary by the worker bees as they will be nothing but a drain on the honey resources that are needed for surviving the winter months. Worker bees are sterile female bees. They can number up to 60,000 in a single hive. As their name suggests, they do all the work of the hive – tending larvae, feeding the queen, cleaning, grooming each other, constructing beeswax, guarding the hive, foraging for nectar and pollen, making honey and keeping the hive cool or warm as needed. They live for a month or two in the active spring or summer, but if reared in late summer or fall they can live through the winter. The Queen is the heart of the colony. Her sole purpose is to ensure the life of the hive by laying eggs. In May or June she will lay 1000 to 2000 eggs daily, working continuously day and night, seven days a week (now you know why the workers have to feed her).

A Year in the Life of a Bee Hive

March – the first warm days see bees coming out of the hives to search for early flowers. This promotes the queen to start laying eggs that hatch as new workers!

April/May – the number of workers is really growing and more flowers are coming to bloom. Brood production continues at a furious pace.

June – the weather is close to perfect, every flower and plant seems to be blooming, and the days are longer. Workers can forage for 14 to 16 hours a day. It is during this time that the hive really grows and makes honey. This is also mating time. Drones reared in great numbers and new queens can be found in stronger colonies. When a new queen emerges from her wax cell the colony is ready to divide. About half the bees leave the hive, usually with the old queen. They will temporarily settle somewhere near and send out scout bees to find a new home. Meanwhile back at the hive, the young queen remains. The next day she will take her mating flight to a drone congregation area and mate with 10 to 15 males. If successful, she will never attempt to mate again.

July/August – there are not many blooming honey plants, bees often just break even on honey productions. Often there is a second honey flow in early fall, but not as much is produced as in the summer.

September/October – winter preparations begins and brood rearing slows down. When cold weather hits they cluster tightly together for warmth.

November through February – the bees are eating stored honey and "shivering" and clustering around the queen to generate heat. If there are enough bees to make a large warm cluster and have sufficient honey they should survive the winter.

Honey is the main reason man has had such a long relationship with bees. Bees make honey by collecting nectar from flowers. "Field bees" can forage for nectar for up to one square mile from their hive and return to the hive with nectar stored in one of their stomachs. (yes, they actually have two stomachs) The nectar is mixed with enzymes in the stomach and the bee spits it into wax comb cells. "House bees" will fan this pre-honey (what I refer to affectionately as bee puke) until enough of the moisture has evaporated. It is then officially but unceremoniously dubbed officially honey by being capped over with more wax for future use.

Another product made by bees that man has found very useful over the years is wax. Beeswax is formed from glands located on the bee's abdomen. They use the wax to build "honey comb" and brood comb. They will build the comb out to fill whatever space is available leaving only 3/8" (9mm) of "bee space" between the sheets of comb.

The modern bee hive is made up of several different parts. A bottom board with a slight inclined ramp into the entrance is the base, on that would be placed "supers" or boxes which hold frames. These come in a variety of sizes to accommodate brood rearing and honey collection. Each frame hanging in the super has a foundation of bees wax inserted in it to assist the bees in creating their comb in uniform

Beekeeping in Anglo-Saxon-Norman England

fashion so the beekeeper can more easily remove the frame for inspection or honey extraction. Covering the supers are inner and outer covers. Some beekeepers choose to use a queen excluder, which is a wire grid, placed between the brood supers and honey supers. This grid is too small for the queen to pass through but big enough for the workers to get through and keeps the queen from laying eggs in the honey supers.

But a hive is nothing but a fancy wooden box without bees. There are several ways a modern beekeeper can get bees. You can purchase an established hive from a beekeeper, which can run from $75 to $100 for a strong hive. You can purchase a divide from an existing hive, called a nuc, and install a queen purchased from a mail order source. This is more economical but it will take the hive at least a year to get up enough strength to produce honey surplus. Many beekeepers elect to purchase a package of bees from a mail order source. You can buy 2 or 3 pounds of bees that come in a wood and screen box, a fertilized queen, and a can of simple syrup for them to eat on the trip to your hive. You can be sure your local post master will call you first thing on the morning you bees arrive as a box full of bees has a tendency to make the average person a little nervous. There is also the possibility that you can catch and install a swarm of bees that have nested someplace where they are not wanted, although this is rare today.

Some of the basic equipment used by the modern beekeeper includes a bee veil, which no hive should be opened without, smoker, gloves, and a hive tool. Many experienced beekeepers opt not to use gloves, trading the occasional sting on the hand for easier manipulation of hive parts. The smoker is used to blow smoke in the hive. When bees encounter smoke they will fill themselves up on honey in case they have to evacuate the hive. It is harder for them to sting with such full bellies. Bees produce a substance called propolis to glue the parts of the hive together. Beekeepers use a hive tool, a miniature crow bar, to pry open inner and outer covers and to get frames out of supers.

If you are interested in beekeeping in your area a good way to start is with you state agricultural department through your state's web page. Here in Kentucky we have a great state apiarist who is available to help new beekeepers and conduct hive inspections. You can also contact your local Cooperative Extension office and ask if there is a local beekeeper's association in your town.

Beekeeping is a wonderful hobby; the few stings you get are worth the satisfaction of watching a strong hive busy with activity on a warm summer day. It gives you the opportunity to slow down a bit, practice some patience and show some care for a little creature that has given us so much over the millennium.

A poem by Virgil as quoted in the "Foure Bookes of Husbandry" by Heresbach:

Togeather all they quietly doo lye,
Togeather all they toyll with equall might:
And in the morning foorth together flye,
And home as fast they come agayne at night.
Where as they lay their weery lims to rest,
And trimme their wynges, and set their legges in frame:
Tyll every one him self hath thoroughly drest,
Then synging at their doores a whyle they game.
Tyll one geves warnying for to goe to bedde,
Then downe they lay to rest theyr sleepie head.

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A Brief overview of Bestiary

By: Lady Katherine of Caithness

A Brief Overview of Bestiary
by Lady Katharine of Caithness

Bestiaries are books that were produced during the Middle Ages that described both real and fictitious animals and accompanied by imaginative drawings. The bestiaries dealt with the natural world but were never meant to be scientific texts. Rather each creature with its unique characteristics was used as a metaphor for Christian virtues or vices.

The original Bestiary was a Greek collection of knowledge The Physiologus (Naturalist) from the second century about animals and the Christian interpretation of nature. Each animal represented some aspect of the struggle between God and the devil. With forty-nine chapters each devoted to a single animal the book was based on the work of classical Greek philosophers such as Aristotle. Other sources included Indian, Hebrew and Egyptian animal lore. Next to the Bible it was the most sought after book.

By the Middle Ages the Physiologus became immensely popular and was translated into almost every European language and those of western Asia. Over the years the Physiologus continued to evolve and incorporated additional sources thus adding more animals and expanding its text on the moral interpretations of the battle between good and evil. Around the 6th or 7th century the Physiologus was translated into Latin, and from the opening line "Bestarum Vocabulum" the genre of Bestiary got its name. By the 12th century Bestiary appeared in its present form in England with a total of hundred and eight chapters.

There are two types of Bestiaries and in the 12th and 13th centuries of England and France there was quite a demand for them. A reason for this may have been it made moral teachings of the church easy to remember for they were descriptive, illustrated and had a pity blunt message to them. The two types were known as Luxurious and Vernacular. The luxurious was lavishly illustrated and written in Latin and were intended for the more literate and wealthy population scholars, clerics, royalty and landed gentry. The vernacular version was much cruder and modest by comparison and intended for the illiterate and lower classes, tradesmen, farmers, shopkeepers.

A great deal depended on how the animal was drawn. If it was a known domestic animal such as sheep, cattle, dogs or cats they were portrayed in a factual manner. Lions, tigers and elephants (oh my!) were drawn in a less then factual manner. Imagination played a major role. Crocodiles were drawn as dog-like creatures, ostriches had hooves and serpents were drawn with feet or wings. It must be pointed out that these drawings were based on written descriptions or earlier drawings of the creatures. They were widely read and in part responsible for a widespread belief in mythical beasts throughout Europe in the Middle Ages.

Today when we have the occasion to peruse these manuscripts with their imaginative illustrations one can not help but be impressed and have their imaginative spirit take flight.

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The Barony of Dragonsspine is a local chapter of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA), within the Kingdom of the Outlands.

The SCA is a non-profit, educational organization dedicated to learning more about the Middle Ages through reenactment. There are SCA chapters worldwide and they hold regular feasts, tournaments, balls and battles.

The Outlands includes New Mexico, Colorado and parts of Texas and Wyoming.

Dragonsspine includes El Paso County, Colorado—centered on Colorado Springs, CO.

Wherever you are, we're a friendly group of people, so why not visit us all?

We're on the Web at:

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